

"THE NATIONALIZATION OF INDUSTRY AND THE PROMOTION OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF HUMANITY." — *Constitution of the Nationalist Club, Boston, Mass.*

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A REPLY TO DR. HEBER NEWTON.

Every Nationalist, I think, ought to feel highly gratified at the form in which Dr. Heber Newton has embodied his criticism of "Nationalism" in the July *Dawn*. I think so, because the incidental parts of this contribution appear to me far more important and suggestive, and will have far more weight with outsiders than the criticism itself, for the simple reason that though the doctor, as he says, "has for years been preaching and writing in the spirit" of our movement, this is the first clear and outspoken declaration on his part, that he is working towards the same goal and in the same lines as we are. This in itself is a most cheering and promising fact. Indeed, ever since I became aware of the Nationalist and Christian Socialist movements, I have considered this awakening of the conscience of our land as a most auspicious commencement of the second century of our National existence, and the adhesion of every such leader of conscience as Dr. Newton must give a momentous weight to these movements.

But, as far as the criticism itself is concerned, I think Dr. Newton is decidedly mistaken, and I trust I shall be pardoned, if I mention in passing, that the first reading of it involuntarily brought to my mind the fable of the man with his ass, who, no matter whether he walked alongside, or rode the ass, or carried it himself, could not satisfy the critical passers-by. For hitherto the great objection to socialism, as taught by foreigners, has been on the part of Americans that it was entirely too vague and indefinite, but now when practical Americans have taken part of this doctrine, widened it, added to it and put it into practical shape, Dr. Newton comes and declares that "to harness the social aspiration to the task of nationalizing industries," as is done in the "Principles" of the Nationalist Clubs, is highly dangerous.

My first reply to this is that, in my opinion, the criticism, as it was first made, was well-taken. I have always thought that the conclusive reason why socialism, which made such strides on the continent of Europe, made comparatively little impression on Americans lay in the fact that only its destructive and critical features were emphasized while its constructive sides were altogether neglected. In this respect the minds of Germans and Frenchmen and those of Americans are entirely different. Prove to the theoretical German mind that our present system is unjust or merely illogical, and he will immediately favor abolishing it and replacing

it with something better. Socialism, as we know, has for years been advocated by Germans both here and in England, and these German teachers very naturally employed the arguments that had been so effective at home. But these arguments were here as ineffective as water poured on a duck's back. Let a given system be proven ever so unjust, the practical American is unwilling to meddle with it, unless an improved model is shown to him. For that reason my concern has been for years to put the critical features of this reform movement in the background, and to lay stress on the co-operative commonwealth which it wants to put in place of the Established Disorder. That this is the right way of proceeding here is proven by the wonderful impression made by the ideal picture in *Looking Backward*.

But Dr. Newton's principal grievance—I trust the expression is not offensive—is that this ideal picture is one drawn from "State Socialism" so-called and that the ideal of those "socialists who look forward simply to vast free institutions of labor and capital united" is neglected. It is impossible to put any other construction on this sentence, than that Dr. Newton thinks Anarchism entitled to as much consideration as "State Socialism"; that he, in fact, regrets that the Nationalist Club is not committed to such latitude as would include Anarchism. This, on the other hand, is in my opinion the great merit of the Nationalists. If ever I have wished to get rid of the name "Socialist" it always has been from a desire to be forever dissociated from the "Anarchists" and I hailed the name "Nationalist" with delight because it enabled me to effect the separation.

The fact is, that Anarchism while historically it may perhaps be classed with Socialism, is not the least socialistic in spirit, but is quite the contrary; its spirit is purely individualistic. It is of the very nature of collectivism or scientific socialism to aim at procuring freedom and leisure for all citizens by collectively controlling all social activities for the collective benefit and submitting everyone to all necessary rules; but Anarchism claims for everyone the right to do just as he pleases; it will not brook the least interference with, or limitation of, its idol "liberty"; it claims for everyone a right of abusing as well as using. It is very easy to show to any reasonable person, that in that way it will destroy and make impossible that very "liberty" which it idolizes. The only liberty worth having is that which gives us a power of which the principal element is leisure to develop all our faculties. Leisure can only be had by utilizing our various

machinery; that can be utilized only in concert by having some as the directors of Labor, as administrators, and by submitting to rules. But Anarchism wants to discard all authority, even self-elected. It will know of no rules. Anarchism is thus, even if anybody could tell us how to work it, absolutely reactionary; it would if realized bring back the time of the Middle Ages, when everyone worked for himself with his own primitive tools, that is, it turns back the wheels of progress and will once more lengthen the working day to thirteen or fourteen hours. Indeed, I must state it as my conviction that while Dr. Newton has a big heart,—a Nationalistic heart,—he is evidently at sea on the phases of collectivism.

Then Dr. Newton again shows a misconception when he opposes “municipalization” to “State Socialism”; as if they were two different things. The so-called “State Socialist” holds that the system of the future will consist in collective control of capital and industries of social interest for the collective benefit, and employs precisely the terms “collective” and “collectively” because they can be applied equally well to the nation, the state, the county and the city. It is the principle that is important and that is everywhere the same. Nationalism, in short, means that national interests shall be controlled by the nation and local interests by the socialities themselves; or more philosophically speaking, *prophesies* that evolution is leading us up to that stage. That being so, is it not evident that Dr. Newton is at sea in saying “I know of no record of such a scheme ever having been tried”? How could the past have tried a scheme which is still in the womb of time and for which all preceding history is but a preparation?

Now, it is easy to see the final error of Dr. Newton. To nationalize industries is to him a goal so far in the future as to be impracticable and no one, according to him, ever has or can “present in a business way any prospectus of such a scheme.” While on the other hand he is perfectly willing to move vigorously forward for “points above the horizon.” Good! as far as the latter is concerned. Now, as such “points above the horizon” Nationalists aim at the nationalization of the telegraph on the one side and municipalization of the gas works on the other. But how can such steps be rationally presented or even intelligently discussed, except as the first stages of a comprehensive scheme, and such a scheme both can be and has been repeatedly “indicated in a business like way”—which these first proposals in fact prove. Of course, only in outline. It is with the social philosopher as with the naturalist. The latter, if he

knows his business, can predict what kind of a plant will grow out of a certain seed, but he cannot tell us how many leaves it will have. So it is with a social philosophy which is worth anything, it ought to be able to present to us the future social order in outline, and this I doubt not our people will insist on having before them before they consent to the first steps.

LAURENCE GRÖNLUND.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

I.

Do you remember
The red September,
When like an ember
From sunset skies
The orchard olden
Looked rosy-golden —
Through silvern mist, a thin disguise;
And I beheld the earth's gay beauty,
Its autumn splendor, full and fruity,
Reflected in your hazel eyes?

III.

Do you remember
The white December,
The dim-lit chamber,
The hearth's dull beams:
At which I found you,
With perfume round you,
Low singing to the fire's faint gleams?
'Twas then that first I kissed your tresses,
And you confessed amid caresses —
It was the Christmas of your dreams.

II.

Do you remember
The gray November,
When pearl and amber
From hill to shore,
With shadows dimmer,
Was all the glimmer
The languid land at sunset wore?
'Twas then through downcast lids love beck-
oned,
And you, in one sweet, sudden second,
Looked up, a woman, — girl no more.

IV.

Now, red Septembers
And gray Novembers
And white Decembers,
With joy and pain,
Have twined around us
So oft, and found us
In pain and pleasure one, — though twain,
That now my memory it doth trouble
To think just when, O sweetest double,
Love in our hearts began his reign.

WALTER ADAMS.